

IN THE CLAIMS:

Amend claims 12-19 and add new claims 21-30 as shown in the following listing of claims, which replaces all previous listings and versions of claims.

1.-10. (canceled)

11. (original) A guide device for positioning catheters in a body duct, the guide device comprising: a long first wire thread; at least one long second wire thread which runs close to the first thread; and a control device connected to the wire threads to control relative movement between the wire threads, the control device generating magnetic fields of different polarities along the first wire thread and along the second wire thread to bring about a mutual attraction of the wire threads at will.

12. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1;~~ claim 11; wherein the first wire thread and/or the second wire thread is manufactured from a magnetizable material or is manufactured from a non-magnetizable material and provided with a magnetizable coating.

13. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1;~~ claim 11; wherein the first wire thread and/or the second wire thread is shaped as a solid body or as a hollow

body, and in the case that both wire threads are shaped as hollow bodies, the control device generates magnetic fields that interact with a magnetizable fluid inside each wire thread.

14. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1,~~ claim 11; wherein the magnetic fields are generated through the application of electric voltage to the wire threads.

15. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1,~~ claim 11; wherein the wire threads are arranged beside each other and parallel to each other, or the wire threads are arranged concentric to each other.

16. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1,~~ claim 11; wherein the first wire thread is arranged centrally on the inside and several second wire threads are arranged around the outer circumference of the first wire thread.

17. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1,~~ claim 11; wherein the wire threads lie flat against each other in response to the magnetic fields to bring about mutual attraction.

18. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1;~~ claim 11; wherein the magnetic fields are generated permanently magnetically, and each wire thread is polarized along its length and alternately oppositely in the radial direction.

19. (currently amended) A guide device according to ~~claim 1;~~ claim 11; wherein the control device enables mutual contact or attachment to each other of the surfaces of the wire threads facing each other, and enables separation of the surfaces from each other through the introduction of a fluid under pressure in a gap between the wire threads.

20. (original) A guide device according to claim 19; wherein the mutual contact or attachment of the surfaces of the wire threads facing each other is brought about through the removal of the fluid.

21. (new) A guide device for guiding a therapy catheter in a body duct, comprising: a flexible sleeve dimensioned to be inserted into a body duct; a first elongate body and one or more second elongate bodies disposed inside the sleeve in side-by-side relation and extending lengthwise along the sleeve; and means for selectively creating magnetic attraction and repulsion forces between the first body and the one or more second bodies to vary the stiffness of the guide device.

22. (new) A guide device according to claim 21; wherein the first body is disposed at the center of the sleeve and plural second bodies are disposed around the outer circumference of the first body; and wherein the means for selectively creating magnetic attraction and repulsion forces comprises creating magnetic fields of opposite polarity along the lengths of the first body and the second bodies.

23. (new) A guide device according to claim 22; wherein the second bodies are movable into and out of contact with the first body in response to the magnetic attraction and repulsion forces.

24. (new) A guide device according to claim 21; wherein the first body and the one or more second bodies are hollow bodies; and wherein the means for selectively creating magnetic attraction and repulsion forces comprises a magnetizable fluid inside each hollow body, and means for creating magnetic fields of opposite polarity that interact with the magnetizable fluid along the lengths of the first body and the one or more second bodies.

25. (new) A guide device according to claim 21; wherein the means for selectively creating magnetic attraction and repulsion forces comprises forming the first and second bodies of permanent magnets that are alternately oppositely

polarized along their lengths, and wherein the first body is movable lengthwise relative to the one or more second bodies to vary the magnetic attraction and repulsion forces.

26. (new) A guide device according to claim 21; wherein the first and second bodies are comprised of magnetizable material or have a coating of magnetizable material.

27. (new) A guide device according to claim 21; wherein the first and second bodies are concentric to one another.

28. (new) A guide device for guiding a therapy catheter in a body duct, comprising: a flexible sleeve dimensioned to be inserted into a body duct; a first elongate, stretchable hollow body disposed inside the sleeve and extending lengthwise along the sleeve; plural second elongate bodies disposed inside the sleeve around the outer circumference of the first body and extending lengthwise along the sleeve, the first and second bodies being movable relative to one another to impart flexibility to the guide device; and means for stretching the first body radially outwardly to radially press the second bodies against the inner wall of the sleeve to impart stiffness to the guide device.

29. (new) A guide device according to claim 28; wherein the means for stretching the first body comprises a pressurized fluid inside the first hollow body.

30. (new) A guide device according to claim 28; wherein the second bodies are comprised of deformable material and undergo deformation when pressed against the inner wall of the seleeve.